The Seed Sower.

A Magazine for the Church, the School, and the Home

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CONTENTS.

		PAGE.
1.	For a Birthday (Poem)	177
2.	To our Readers	177
3.	The King's Question (Sermon)	178
4.	The Church and the World	183
5.	Dying Leaf and Dying Year	184
6.	Respect the Burthen (Poem)...	186
7.	Notes and Jottings	186
8.	For the Children—The Boy Next Door ...	188
9	Guild News	189
10.	News from the Field	191

For a Birthday.

I KEEP no reckoning of the years
As they pass by.
Life's seasons, with their smiles and tears,
Unnumbered fly;
So whether twenty be the score—
Or twenties two—or three—or four—
Still young am I!

But ah! the Days are mine to hold
In loving fee,
And all their richness I am bold
To feel and see!
I hail each morn the added round,
And in their wealth to-day is found
This thought of thee!

Couldst thou but gain the good I pray,
My prayers might cease:
Thy Birthday would become a day
Of heart's release.
Not wealth nor honors wish I thee—
But loftier wish: that thou mayst be
Thyself at peace!

J. H. WEST.

WHAT madness to be afraid of belonging too fully to God! It is fearing to be too happy; it is fearing to love His will in all things; it is fearing to become too courageous in bearing the crosses that must be allotted to us; to have too much of the consolation of God's love, too much freedom from the miseries of human passions.—*Fénelon.*

To our Readers.

WHEN Thackeray found he must put up the shutters at the office of the newspaper he had started he humorously issued the last number in black borders for its decease. In announcing the discontinuance of the SEED SOWER, the Editor does not propose to go into mourning or to display the conventional signs of grief. He has the satisfaction of knowing that for sixteen years his little magazine has answered a useful purpose, has been a welcome visitor in many homes, and has rendered some good service to our Free Churches. It is a matter for some pride that the SEED SOWER is almost the only journal or magazine our Free Churches have known that has never been subsidised. It has followed an independent line, caring much less for sectarian propaganda than for the promotion of the Liberal Faith everywhere. In quitting the stage and making its final bow, the SEED SOWER desires to thank the small army of contributors who have so generously given their assistance and helped to make its pages bright and interesting. It also tenders its thanks to many friends who have from time to time written and spoken in kind appreciation of its efforts.

Whether by one hand or another may the good cause flourish.

The King's Question.

By the Rev. Dr. Robert Collyer.*

"Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old art thou? And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years. Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been."—Gen. xlviii., 8, 9.

When this day draws near in my own life's calendar, I love to commune with a man who was born almost two thousand years ago, and still lives to a noble purpose in the spiritual body we call a book, and talks with me as a man talks with his friend. The book was written, he tells us, for a few choice friends—these, and these alone; but it was done with such a rare wisdom and grace that it could no more be confined to them than the sunshine could, or the rain from heaven. It is an essay on old age, written when he was well on in years, and so spoke from the centre. He was a man also of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, and was steeped to the lips in misfortune when he would tell the old friends how he fared.

His home had been made desolate with the desolation which to such a man is worse than death, for death had taken his dear maid child, his darling, his one choice treasure in all this world; and his only son was a profligate and a spendthrift. He had been compelled to put away his wife, but had dreamed he might have a home again where the sunshine would flood the living-room, and joy would reign queen-regnant of the last years; but, wise man as he was, he soon found he had made a great mistake. December could not clasp hands with May, or bells so diverse make one music in the home; and so for the old man the dream came to a rude waking, and now he was alone in the living-room once more.

He was also, perhaps, the most eminent man of his time, and for his pre-eminent services had been called "the Father of his Country"; but now no party in the republic wanted or would have his services, while of all men he saw most clearly the downward drift of the republic of which he was a citizen into the slough of Imperialism, after her splendid record of eight hundred years, which was to end in utter ruin and shame. This is the man and this the time when he will open his heart to a few friends, with no thought that he would thereby open it to the world through the ages and millenniums still unborn; while we may well imagine that, with the life and fortune I have glanced at, his essay on old age would match well when it was done with the sermon ascribed to the sad old king in our Scriptures from the text, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." But some of you have found what I have found, that nothing can be further from the old man's heart or purpose. There he sits in the mellow evening sunshine of the far-away old world and time; and, when this week comes round, there he sits with me in the quietness of my morning, while I seem through the hours of our communion one of the friends for whose sake he has hidden his heart in the immortal book, ready to answer the questions touching what we, who are now as he was then and where he was then, shall say to the swiftly passing years. While it would be no great wonder if I should find him all out of tune with the world he lived in so long, and as sad and bitter about the outcome as a thousand men are of his age we could easily find on this island or a million between this and the other ocean.

This first, and then what we may do who begin to feel there is not much left we can do, because the time is short, and how much we may still enjoy if we stand true to the holy laws of our life, and therefore to God, though we may be saying in our hearts that the joys and enjoyments of our life are drying up at the spring-head. So, when we talk together, I am glad to have him tell me this, because I find it is so true to my own life, and also to the life of so many I have known and loved or still know and love, that the sorrows and disasters which had fallen on him in the later years had really made him somewhat hard and bitter for a while, while still, as the years told their tale from the few to the many, he had to notice that even little things were apt to put him out of temper. But, when he began to be aware of this downward drift toward a poor and mean

* A Sermon preached by Dr. Collyer on his birthday.

conclusion touching the sum and substance of the years, he saw this would never do, he must not give way to the distemper, but must try to win a sweeter and finer temper as he grew older, and be not the less, but all the more a man through what he must do and bear. For, if we turn to our mother nature, he said, we may notice how the crabs and the wild grapes grow mellower and sweeter with the frosts of age. While, if we compare our life to a drama, it is not to be imagined that the earlier acts which may stand for our youth and prime should make for a lame and impotent conclusion, when we come to the last and greatest, where all the scenes meet to round out the story a life should tell.

Nor will it be so, my wise and gracious mentor said again, if you make sure of this as you wend on from youth to old age, that there shall be some real deepness of life and purpose in the years of your youth and prime, like that of the roots which defy the droughts of the summer. Whereat I answered, Yes, indeed, or like our growing corn, which in the hottest weather still holds the morning dew and some silting of the rain away down within its sheaths; for he did not seem to know about our corn. Then, as we communed in the silence, I found the old man had no great faith in some things we set store on, because he had weighed them in these last years and found them wanting. The applause of listening senates, the honour which comes and goes on the breath of those who bestow it, and the shouts of the multitudes who will crown or crucify such a man as he was in the public life, as the humour takes them—he had tried these things, and found them worthless as withered weeds in November. Nor did he think much of the wealth men gather for the mere greed of growing rich. He had done that, but could see now that there must be some worth of honest striving in a man to do something well worth the doing and well worth the wealth we win, or it is of scant use to an old man, or any man, indeed, any more than the years are which hold no record of the good we have done to others, while we have only been seeking good for ourselves. So let all the years be of this brand, and there can be no great satisfaction when they have almost told their tale. We must have some treasure of real worth to fall back upon then, and not an exhausted receiver in which all things die.

He would not say, however, that poverty is in itself a blessing when the shadows of our life lengthen, because he thought old age with poverty only for its hapless crown must be a burden hard to bear, and yet wealth, when this is all we have to our name, may be a greater burden; while, after all, he knows men who have no wealth to speak of, but they do manage to be very bright and cheerful, because the treasure is in them of a well-spent and useful life to make them rich. I was greatly pleased again to have him tell me another truth I have often tried to tell myself—that it is a great mistake when we are growing old to give up, and, as we say now, be laid on the shelf, when we find our powers are failing a little, or more than a little, year by year, so that we cannot push things forward in word or deed with the old vim and vigour. The very best thing you can do then, he said, is to stick to your ship; and, if you cannot climb the masts or take your turn at the pump or clear the deck, you may still be a good pilot. We must always do what we *can* when old age creeps on, and when we can no longer do what we *would*, because the most hapless old men, I notice, are so often those who seem to have nothing in the world to do, and so they have nothing in the world to live for. And he could also tell me of many men he had known who had done a very choice stroke of work when they were eighty years old, or ninety even, and of one who was a hundred—old generals who had conducted great campaigns, old statesmen who had won new laurels, old thinkers who had written good books, and old neighbours on the farms who were wonders of good farming. Yes, and I was an old man myself, he said, when I made up my mind to learn Greek, that I might read some noble books in that tongue; and now I can read with the best. I also had a mind to learn to play on the lyre, but found this had gone out of fashion; but I myself was not sure he had found no one was willing to listen to the old man when he would set his poor, stiff fingers to the instrument at his time of life, and so he gave it up.

This was his answer so far to the thought which lay in my heart as I glanced at the home calendar by the gleam of the king's question to the patriarch, "How old art thou?" You are young enough, he said, to keep on doing your best with what powers you still possess, and to hold your life fresh and fair as it can be held on these terms. But say you can do no more to any fair purpose, and then be, I will not say as good, but as bad as your word. Do this, and you will find very scant worth in the years that remain; while it is quite probable you will not have the years you might count on, because the waters of life will grow stagnant, and you will die when you have no motive to live.

And now about those failing powers again, my wise old mentor said—let us see what we mean by lamenting over our failing powers. Do we mean we can take no such pleasure in the things that touch the senses and belong to what one may call the brute force of a man? Well, this may be no loss, but a gain. I saw a man weep bitterly once when he saw a mighty feat of strength put forth by another man he could have surpassed in his prime, looking on his own wasted arms; but now where is your manhood when this lies only in your thews and sinews?

And I myself have no such appetite for food, he said, as I had some years ago; but I am glad of the change, because I find it gives me leisure for nobler things than eating and drinking. So, while I grow old in my body, I can renew the youth of the mind and heart, and quite agree with a fine old Greek who, when they asked him if he did not still love these pleasant things of the senses, said, "The gods have done better by me: they have set me free from my tyrants." Still, my mentor said, I love to keep up the fine old customs of hospitality—to gather my friends about me when I may, and give them of my best because they still enjoy these things, while I enjoy their good bright company; and this, I think, old age should covet, lest we grow lonely then and sad of heart. I have also gathered about me many good books—books that will last me my lifetime, and will still be good for those who come after me as they are to me now—these books I love. I love my orchards also, and meadows, my vines, and my bees; and to dig in the soil now and then, and smell the freshness of the new-turned earth. To go after my sheep and kine, to watch the grapes ripen on the vines, and note my stores of milk and oil, of cheese and honey; to sit under my trees in the summer time and by my good log fire in the winter—these are far more to me now than the splendours of the imperial city, and the fevered life of which I have grown so tired in these last times.

But this, as you will see, touches only the life that now is; and, if this was all, he could not have given the whole answer I wanted and waited for to the king's question, "How old art thou?" And this was not the whole answer; for he said: I am looking forward now to a day when I must leave this world, for it is true that the young *may* die soon, but the old *must;* and what then? I will tell you this, first of all. My life grows sweeter as the years come and go, while I find the treasures within and about me which will hold good, I trust, for as many years as may stand to my name. And I try to let no day pass in mere dreaming, because to be busy is to be content; and this brings life to life for me. Here is passion and appetite abated, as I said, those good servants, but bad masters; while my ambition is nestling down, not caring to plume her wings again in these troubled times. Troubles are waiting outdoors, I know, if I would take them in once more and nurse them at the waning fires of life; but enough for the day now is the evil thereof, and how much more is the good than the evil! Still the years are drawing to an end: here is another milestone passed. The end must be drawing near now; and will not this be the very hardest of all things life or death can bring me—to leave this warm nest I have made down here for the unknown?

Well, it was here, I thought, the grand old man came forth in all his greatness, while it seemed to me his eyes shone with the light that is not of the sun—the light which lights the sun. Our old age, he said, should not find us timid when we ask these questions, but brave and strong and fearless, that we may give lessons to youth in courage and for-

titude; for he was right who, when one asked him where he found his power to meet and master the tyrant time, answered, "In old age." So what years remain must not be clutched too greedily or given up too easily, nor must we desert the post until we get our orders from the great Commander. Nor must we fear death, but nourish the thought rather; for we do not fear death in the thick of battle. Why, then, should we fear death as the close and consummation of all the battles?

Then my mentor touched the heart of his noble discourse. He said: "I believe the dear friends we call dead are still living in the only life which truly deserves the name. For we must not believe that these souls of ours with their remembrance of the past and long look toward the future, so great in art, so profound in science, so fertile in invention—that these souls, I say, can be mortal, and die with our death. So, for my own part, I am nourishing a great desire to see these friends again I have loved and revered in this life. So great, indeed, that I think it would not be easy to turn me back on my way to meet them; while, if the gods should grant me the choice of returning back to the days of my youth, I would steadily refuse the boon. I am glad to have lived all these years, and cannot but believe I have lived to some fair purpose, but now I am ready to depart as from an inn rather than from a home; and it will be a glad day for me when I go to the assembly of great and noble souls out of the crowd and tumult of the time, while, if I err in believing the souls of men are immortal, I am glad to err."

This was the tenor of the old man's monologue, when we come to the truth which lay deepest in his heart. He loved his life and this world he had lived in so long; but now, as the end drew near, this was his joy—that he could look forward through the valley and shadow of death to the time where time is no more, when he also should not be unclothed, but clothed upon, where mortality is swallowed up of life, and where he would find those he loved, and be with them for evermore.

And this is all the more wonderful and beautiful to me because he was what we call a heathen who lived in the heart and central life of that old, lost world a good fifty years before the advent of the dear Son of God our Christ, who brought life and immortality out of the shadows into the light. While there was sore mourning and lamenting all about him and from his own poor heart when the dear maid was taken and he was left, and old age to the enormous majority of them brought only forboding and fear. But he sat there—and I should know him among ten thousand as some of you would—sat there with the light in his eyes, talking to me in the matchless tones that won the world once to listen.

And, then, as I sat in the silence, thinking of what I had heard and of the impulse which prompted me to open the book, and thought also of the white patriarch's answer to the king's question, "Few and evil have been the days of the years of my life," I said in my heart, This was true no doubt touching your own life, but it was not true to the man to whose wise and pregnant words I have listened. Not true that "the days of our years are few" who have lived, shall we say, to my own age, as I can testify, and not evil, but good, when we realise, as we may, how their sorrow may be softened for us, and the joy be made sweet and sacred, if the true heart is in us now, and least of all for those who have been long on pilgrimage, and as, when we have traversed some rugged way and stand in the evening sunlight, the way is transfigured while we think of the shadows where we rested and the springs from which we were refreshed.

So we look down the vista, and may say "evil and few" or "many and good" as the heart can desire, as we weigh the sorrow against the joy; but we shall come to the patriarch's conclusion when at the last his son Joseph brought the boys to receive his blessing, what time his eyes were dim with age so that he could not see, and he kissed them and said to his son, "I had not thought to see thy face, and lo! God hath let me see thy sons also"; and he blessed him and laid his hands on his grandsons, and said, "The God which hath fed me all my life long, and the angel who hath redeemed me, bless the lads." And so we may say if we walk by faith

in His eternal love from which our love springs as the waters spring from the deeps of the world and the mighty heart of the ocean, losing their salt bitterness by the transmutation of earth and heaven, but not alone from the heavens flecked with the sunshine, but from black winter and the storms. All the days, then, are to be treasured for worth in the heart when we look back through the many years, whether we must count them for loss or gain, for sorrow or for joy, because they are all His days before they can be ours; while, if it be, indeed, true that we can only look back on some of them with pain and regret, then this is true also, that "He knoweth our frame and remembereth that we are dust," and, "like as a father pitieth his children," so is His pity for me and you. Yes, and because we are His children, when all is said and done, no matter how we may have blundered and stumbled on the rugged way on which we have come, if this true heart is in us, we may learn something by our failures we could not have learned by our successes.

There may or must be evil days for us we would fain blot out, and leave only those which hold some grain of worth or of nobility in them; but, for one, I would take heart and hope in the faith that these may have done for me what the nobler and more gracious days never could have done by the old pilot's tenor when one said to him, "Do you know all about these waters?" and he answered, "I know where the reefs are, and the rocks, and sand-bars."

And so, as the years touch us with their sweet or bitter or bitter-sweet memories, I love again to have them stand in that enchantment of time and distance which so softens our sorrow and pain, as sweet bells jangled out of tune and harsh, when we stand too near them in the tower, fall into a soft melody when we listen to them from far away. So I can clasp the sorrows and losses the years have brought closer to my heart, and drive the thorns in deeper; but this will not be God's will touching them, or nature's will, but my own wilfulness.

A friend told me one day of a plant he found in the arid lands southward, set all about with thorns; but in the heart of the fruit there is cool water for your refreshing; and so we may find the water of life in the thorns of our yesterdays if we are wise to find the good within the evil, if we *grow* wise as we grow old. And it is the most natural thing in the world that we should look back and count them as we do, for we are men and women, and not of the beasts that perish; and in our power to do this lie the terms of the nobler life, so that they are not mere memories, if we are true to this teaching, any more than the June days were to the ripe fruit and grain for which we lift our hearts in the great Thanksgiving. My fine old mentor's youth was in him still when he sat down to write his book; mine is in me. The small place, the home whence I came to find you here this morning, has been long swept away, with the plum-tree and the rose-bush by the door. There is not one stone left upon another of the home. But what matter, what matter? The home stands there still in the sunshine, always in the sunshine now; and I see it as I sit alone in the home over here and shake down the plums when they are ripe, and the perfume of the roses that never fade now or fall floats into the room as I look backward in the tender light of the days that are no more and yet are for evermore, while I still hear the voice of my mother calling to me or telling stories by the fireside in the winter evenings.

The farthest away of the days and the years are deepest while they are all in my heart and my life, as they are and will be in yours. They are the sum so far of the life that now is, and are beckoning us, not backward, if we are true to them, but forward toward that which is to come. Yes, and, while we count our losses, they can whisper to us also of our gains. So many gone, so many only left; but the little maid's refrain to the good poet in Westmoreland is for ever true:—

"How many are there, then, said I,
If there are two in heaven?
Quick was the little maid's reply,
O master, we are seven.

"But they are dead—those two are dead:
Their spirits are in heaven.
'Twas throwing words away; for still

The little maid would have her will,
And said, Nay, we are seven."

Therefore, as I think of the days and the years that, as we say, are no more, this is the truth I would lay to my heart, won from the very things which blot the book of my life—that

"Nothing pays but God,
Served whether in the smoke-shut battle-field,
In work obscurely done, but honestly, or vote
For truth unpopular, or faith maintained
To ruinous conviction, or good deeds
Wrought for God's sake, heedless of heaven or hell."

The Church and the World.

Often one hears it said, by people who seldom or never darken the doors of the sanctuary, that the Church is a valuable institution, admirably adapted for the uses of women and children. To such minds it stands vaguely as a moral lighthouse to warn the young and feebleminded off the rocks, while for the experienced man of large knowledge and ripe judgment its value is nil. That it keeps up the belief in spiritual verities, that it offers a way out of narrow materialism and selfish living, that it stimulates and feeds the soul by the noblest ideals, that it embraces, in fact, the soulful side of life and answers to the hunger and thirst after righteousness, is hardly taken into account by those who regard the Church as a good investment in raising the value of neighbouring real estate and a moral kindergarten for the least intelligent classes.

This is not an imaginary picture. The material side of the Church bulks very large in the minds of some who join to get into the best social set or to extend their business relations among solid financiers. Consequently, it is well sometimes to ask what is the real relation of the Church to the world and the vital points of connection between the two.

"In the world, but not of it," was the formula that for long ages seemed to describe the Christian Church and to define its position toward the great indifferent, semi-hostile mass of human beings outside its fold. But the relation of Church and world has radically changed within the last century, until to-day we see the whole effort of the former directed toward driving a sharp wedge into the apathy of the masses and stimulating interest grown inert. Church walls and partitions must inevitably give way before the imperious demands of the neglected, we may say the forgotten classes, who are now awakening to the fact that they have souls to save and bodies to redeem. The stunted, ignorant, degraded people in factory and workshop, in mine, in a thousand loathsome abodes of toil, can justly bring their grievances home to the door of the Church and lay them there as a silent witness that it has not yet fulfilled its duty toward the world, and has a great task before it for man's redemption. You will say the scores of navvies working in the railway cut, the hundreds of girls pouring at dusk out of the gates of the great mill, have not the trained intelligence to appreciate the sermon delivered in the Church only a stone's throw from where they are wearing themselves out at joyless, soul-destroying labour.

Shall the Church always stand apart from the great lives of poorly paid industry, from the millions who live in the reek and grime of the slums and ghettos and dens and dives of our great cities? There are signs that the Church is awakening to its great privilege and opportunity of reaching the people more largely than it ever has since the Middle Ages, when it was schoolmaster, asylum, and dispenser of dole to its dependent classes. No real Church now dares to say that it is not of this world; for, if it is not, what is the value of its mission?—not surely to those who need not to be saved and uplifted. To the starving a tract or a sermon is a mockery of pabulum.

There are thousands upon thousands asking for a day's wage by which they may live less like dumb driven cattle and more like beings made in God's image. A great work is cut out for the Church in reaching and raising these who are aliens and outcasts in the world.

How shall it be done? By quickened hearts and consciences, by a new sense of

moral responsibility, and new conceptions of the relation of the Church and the world, a new consecration to fact instead of theory, to reality instead of a false sense of security. The needs of the world are the opportunity of the Church, and a fresh spirit of devotion and enthusiasm will open the way for new methods of service. If the old means have been outworn and have proved ineffective, there are always new paths to be opened through the wilderness, fresh ground to be turned over in which lie millions of germs ready to spring up for the making of bread for human bodies and nourishment for human souls.

Dying Leaf and Dying Year.

The poet tells us that

"The memory of the withered leaf
In endless time is scarce more brief
Than of the garnered autumn sheaf."

It may be so; and yet the memory of the sheaf, which falls only in its full ripeness, bears with it no such mournful regret as that which follows the leaf borne away by the blast from the summer sunshine, and left to perish untimely on the ground. The sense of incompleteness in a human life cut off in its prime, the failure of hopes, the scattering to the winds of a thousand promises, are elements of sadness very different from those which gather round the death-bed of hoary age. When some venerable form long known amongst us—a great statesman, soldier, thinker—passes away gently and slowly to "the house appointed for all living," and we learn that we shall see him no more in our streets, we feel sorrowful indeed, but we hardly speak of regret. The appointed time has come; the long bright day has drawn to its natural close, and it is time for rest. We say to a Wellington, a Palmerston, a Herschel—

"Thou thy six days' work hast done,
Home art gone and ta'en thy wages,"

and the heat of the sun and the furious wintry winds shall disturb him no more. Beethoven's Funeral March, so solemn and grandly sonorous, but without one note of wailing, gives voice to all the nation's sentiment. The relics of the dead are borne with reverent pomp to their last resting-place beneath the dome of St. Paul's or the fretted aisles of Westminster, and we feel as we leave them there alone, not so much that a calamity has evertaken us, as that a long, eloquent chapter of human history has worthily closed.

But it is with very different thoughts we contemplate death in youth, or death in the prime of manly strength and hope. When the genius of Shelley was suddenly quenched by the cruel waters, even as it seemed daily to grow more luminous; when Cavour was cut off just as his life's high ambition for his country's unity ceased to be a dream; when Lincoln fell, in the honour of his nation's victory and redemption,—then, men smote their breasts, and cried, Alas for the dead! Alas for the world! The sudden eclipse is terrible. The calm, slow sunset, though sad, is sweet. These fourscore years of ours at their fullest measure always seem to us as if they were a few—just a few—less long than we need to do the work and learn the lesson of life, and drink its mingled cup of joy and sorrow to the dregs. Like the Spanish King, we are tempted to say that, had it been left to us to appoint the order of the universe, we should have done it differently. Perhaps we say we should have allotted less space to childhood and decline, and made longer the precious noon, in which alone man has come to the possession of his powers and retains the full use of them all. Above all, the early deaths, which abbreviate and make doubtful our little span, and render the lives of so many mere fragments, unfinished as the half-hewn marble block, the picture scarcely sketched, the melody arrested ere its close—these miserable failures of every purpose we can understand should happen no more. The old man should fall at five-score years, and the young man should rejoice in his youth, knowing that for him there was yet much good laid up for many years, and that with no sudden call should his soul be required of him. Vain dream and idle! Were life prolonged, we should but enlarge our ambitions, and find it, though a century long, as much too short for them as it is too short for our own at three-score years and ten. Were death unknown in youth or manhood, all that is gravest, deepest, and,

though saddest, yet most noble, in our actual existence, would pass away.

Strangely does Nature seem at this season to harmonise with the mourning which she so often brings. The damps of autumn, the nipping frosts, which cut off the frail lives already hanging on a thread, have surely in their gloom somewhat which stills sorrow better than the bright glaring summer weather. To waken in a June morning and see the whole landscape flooded with sunshine, the birds carolling, the insects humming among the radiant flowers, as if no such thing as sickness or grief were ever known, while all the time there stands, in the one dark room in our house, the black coffin, wherein lies that which alone made earth's sunshine for us—this is an agony which causes Nature to seem almost hateful in her irresponsive joy. We shrink from her, and close out her cruel sunshine, and shut our ears to her laughter, and never from that day hear the singing birds or watch the dewy flowers of the dawn without a pang of mistrust. Summer and the glowing daylight belong to life and happiness; but winter and night are fit for death and sorrow. As Nature draws around her with the dying year the shroud of mist and gloom, so in stillness and resignation we grow calm at last, and dwell upon our sorrow, not with outbreaks of hysteric grief, but patiently, as the raindrops fall and the yellow leaves flutter down upon the grass. All things are solemn to us in such hours. No voice from woods or waters calls on us in discordant notes of cheerfulness to leave the thoughts of sorrow and turn to brighter themes. We are content for a while to realise the graver, darker, deeper side of human life, and to face the thought, ever old yet ever new, and awful as the thought of God, "We must surely die!" Is this deeper view all painful, all terrible? Assuredly those who have never known such experience are not to be envied, but rather to be pitied. An existence which goes on from year to year, like that of a butterfly, from flower to flower, without any change save that of one pleasure for another, is, after all—much as we may be disposed in our weakness to covet it—a poor and paltry thing, a worthless string of glittering hours. When we see men and women whom fate has exempted from any serious pain of mind or body—on whose heads wealth, and health, and love have been lavished, and from whose arms no affection has ever fled away—we fail not to find that with the absence of sorrow has come also the lack of all those deeper tendernesses and those truer estimates of the relative value of things which the stern lessons of grief and pain alone can teach. No one who has not suffered deeply has ever loved deeply—prayed deeply—enjoyed deeply. The plough which cuts sharpest furrows in our hearts alone enables them to bear their richest harvest. Many a spoiled child of fortune—many a

"Lady nursed in pomp and pleasure,"

the flattered and indulged of all around—would, we are persuaded, be glad to exchange, could they but know the truth, with the suffering and the bereaved, who have been taught holier and, in the highest sense, even happier lessons than those which success or pleasure can ever bring. "Those whom the gods love die young," said the old Greek oracle. "Those whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth," said the Christian apostle. The wisdom of both is justified to him who believes that we are placed on earth for a higher end than the mere enjoyment of the passing hour, and that "the sufferings of this present time" are not worthy to be compared with the glory and the good which will one day be revealed as the final goal of all—the

"One far-off divine event,
Towards which the whole creation moves."

FRANCES POWER COBBE.

I DREAM sometimes of peace when one might have more inward and less outward business; but after forty years' experience I find that the inward is not better in my case, but worse for want of the outward, and that I really seek God most when I need his help to enable me to do what He has set me to do.—*F. K. Maurice.*

I WANT to be a vital part of the harmonising force of the world, and I want to feel, I do feel, that he who at his best aims at this end, however poorly he may succeed, has the balance of influence throughout this and all other worlds on his side.—*Frederick A. Hinckley.*

Respect the Burthen.

AN INCIDENT.

THE AUTHOR OF "JOHN HALIFAX, GENTLEMAN."

GREAT Garibaldi, through the streets one day,
Passing triumphant, while admiring throngs,
With acclamations and exultant songs,
For the uncrowned kingly man made way,—
Met one poor knave, 'neath heavy burden bowed,
Indifferent to the hero and the crowd.

His zealous followers would have driven aside
The sorry creature, but that good man said,
Stretching a kind hand o'er the suffering head,
"Respect the burthen." Then, majestic-eyed,
He paused, and passed on, no one saying him nay:
The heavy-laden also went his way.

Thou happy soul, who travellest like a king
Along the rose-strewn pathway of thy lot,
Respect the burthen. Thou may'st see it, or not,
For one heart is to another a sealed thing.
Laughter there is that hideth sobs or moans:
Firm footsteps can leave blood-prints on the stones.

Respect the burthen, whatsoe'er it be:
Whether loud outcries vex the startled air,
Or in dumb agony of loss, despair
Lifts her still face, so like tranquility;—
Though each strained heart-string quivers, never shrinks:
"Let this cup pass from me!"—then, stoops and drinks.

O heavy burthen! Why 'tis borne, and how,
None know save those who bear; and Him whose hand
Has laid it on the shoulder and said "Stand—
Stand upright. Take this chrism upon thy brow,
My own anointed. Sore thy load may be;
But know,—beneath it thou art carrying Me."

Notes and Jottings.

THE persistent plea of the President of our National Conference for more effective organisation has raised a discussion in our leading organ, the *Inquirer*. It is a vitally important subject which ought to command the interest of all who have the welfare of our congregations at heart. It is to be hoped that the whole situation will be ruthlessly analysed and exposed. Time after time it has been brought forward for consideration, but just at the critical moment when the real issues are about to emerge into clear light, some one cries "Peace, enough!" and the controversy is once more decently covered up to remain a smouldering discontent until it bursts forth again in a few months.

* * * * *

This hushing up of matters that are being perpetually talked about in private by ministers and laymen discourages and disheartens everyone who is eager for reform. We need more not less publicity. There is everything to gain and nothing (not even temper) to lose by candidly thrashing out our differences. I believe it is the refusal to face a full and open discussion that accounts in large measure, not merely for two, but for many "opposing tendencies" in our body.

Let me give an example of the franker way.

* * * * *

The Anti-Socialist campaign has driven me (for my soul's health's sake) to read the extreme organs of the Labour Movement. It would surprise quite a number of people to know that there is nothing about bombs, daggers, and deadly poisons in these papers. But there is that confident and even religious earnestness, that steady and absolute trust in the victoriousness of Justice and Truth which is not afraid of open discussion. So we frequently find prominent leaders of the Labour Movement beating out their difficulties in public, doing their thinking, as it were, in print.

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They may have much hearty contempt for those outside their movement, just as some Unitarians have for those outside their movement, but as between themselves they address,

as a rule, only plain, practical, common-sense appeals to the reason and conscience. There is no disguising of issues in a rosy mist of rhetoric. When a real weakness in argument is exposed, when a real point is made, it is at once unreservedly recognised; when a fallacy in logic, or an error in fact is mercilessly tracked down and caught red-handed, you will find no attempt to shuffle and escape. The arrest is frankly admitted with a compliment to the policeman, "It's a fair cop, and I'll go quietly."

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Now, we need in our movement some of this candour. There is, of course, no danger of vulgarity among so eminently respectable and well-bred a people as ourselves. Instead of speaking—odious phrase!—of "a fair cop" we shall put it in this way—"that there is a plausible element of truth in my opponent's argument might perhaps be conceded with safety," or a Latin tag may help us out with some dignity, thus—"if what my critic means to say is so and so, then of course *cadit questio*." It really does not matter much how we do it, so long as we have the saving grace to discuss fearlessly, and admit our complete guilt when Truth comes in blue vestments and bright buttons (symbolical of the sky and the stars, I suppose) and slips handcuffs over our errors. "It's a fair cop, and I'll go quietly" is not a delicate metaphor, but it is vivid and graphic. Personally I lean to a form of expression savouring less of the Police Court and more of the Academy. But as the Apostle (who, by the way, came more than once into conflict with the authorities) said "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."

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Now, this question of the better organisation of our congregations has been raised again and again for many years, and it will continue to be raised until it is really answered or until there is no Unitarian left to raise it. There is not a man among us who is happy about it. The present individualistic or, rather, anarchial method of ultra-congregationalism—each little Church being a law unto itself, and subsisting on doles and largesse granted by the Unitarian Association, which its best friends must admit to be an unrepresentative doctrinal society, like the Trinitarian Bible Society, has proved an utter fiasco. There is nothing to be said in favour of the present system or lack of system, except that we have no other central grant-distributing body. The National Conference is indeed representative of our congregations, as the Unitarian Association is not, but the Conference has no money to give, and is regarded with superstitious fear by many of our members and even by some of its own Committee. There is reason to believe that some prominent supporters of the Unitarian Association rejoice in deepening a distrust of the Conference. So we muddle on in a bewildered and impotent way without a common life or a common policy or an effective central organisation.

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It is not a question whether we are to have more or less Ecclesiasticism than at present, but whether we shall have a better or a worse Ecclesiasticism. We have already an Ecclesiasticism, a Unitarian Ecclesiasticism, in its worst and most menacing form, an Ecclesiasticism without due responsibility to the Churches, and without genuine democratic control. A clever and unscrupulous adventurer, who can manage to impresss some isolated and helpless little congregation with a flashy sermon, is invited permanently to fill the pulpit, and thereupon attains the status of a minister. A tried and worthy minister, with a splendid record, sinks out of memory, unless one or two influential people, exercising episcopal functions without episcopal responsibility, push him to the front. No minister has more than a few months' security of tenure, and he can be dismissed without appeal like a clerk by an employer. Anyone who makes a certain minimum cash payment per annum becomes a member of the congregation as if it were a club or a business enterprise. Not long ago I heard of a chairman of a Church Committee who made a slip of the tongue in saying that a certain matter was too important for the committee to decide and ought to be brought before a general meeting of the *share-holders*. By a natural and almost inspired mistake he alighted on

a brilliant truth. A member may be a cantankerous idler, a self-assertive busybody and mischief-maker, but he has paid his money "like a man" and it is enough. "It is enough, now let me die," the minister may well exclaim with the prophet. On the other hand, a poor man who is unable to pay money, but is a constant and devout worshipper, a self-sacrificing worker, a regular communicant, and all that may be meant by a loyal member, is no member at all and has no vote because he is too impecunious to be a "share-holder." Once more, a member of one congregation moves to another town and seeks admission into our congregation there; but by no system of transfer can he be reckoned a member of the second congregation. He must buy another share there and wait until his name has been on the register for a certain period of time.

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When he settles down it is to find himself in a new and alien atmosphere. The whole form of worship is strange and unfamiliar. The congregation has a different liturgy (or no liturgy at all) and a peculiar hymn-book, compiled by the estimable predecessor of the present minister, and full of astonishing original poems. The minister of the congregation from which the member came was a Christian in keen sympathy with the Liberal Christian movement everywhere. His present minister is a "Theist" who considers himself far too enlightened and spiritual to be a disciple of Christ. He cannot conscientiously countenance such old-fashioned rites as Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and instead of readings from an obsolete Bible he gives select extracts from Omar Khayyam, the Bhagavad Gita, and Walt Whitman.

I am not citing any actual case known to me, but this kind of thing can easily happen. It is an extreme illustration, but it indicates our difficulties and exhibits the price we have to pay for what we still curiously persist in calling our "freedom." This confusion is no more freedom than a block in the traffic due to the absence of a common understanding of the rules of the road is freedom to drive as we please. An autocratic pointsman, even an obfuscated pope, can ensure more true freedom than this. How to secure the maximum of real life and liberty is the problem which our Churches must face and solve. One thing is clear to demonstration that in ecclesiastical, as in political life, individualism works confusion and death, not liberty and life.

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The time has arrived when we must confront our difficulties with greater sincerity and courage. We must, on peril of extinction, try to combine on a common Church policy and action; and we need first of all a full, free, and frank discussion. But no discussion can avail unless there is a genuine desire to organise our separate congregations into a single corporate Church. I should like to see Martineau's scheme boldly revived by our National Conference and accepted as a basis for discussion. Some details would doubtless have to be modified, but the mere consideration of such a scheme in a serious and statesmanlike spirit would do much to repress follies and eccentricities and bring us more closely together in a realisation of our corporate Christian life. Unless a determined effort is made, and made quickly, there will be few congregations left to organise. Our religious testimony will have been poured out, at worst into the desert sands of history, and at best into the general sea of humanity, there to be lost as a distinct contribution, and to survive, if at all, as an undistinguished and unrecognised influence.

J. M. Lloyd Thomas.

For the Children.

The Boy Next Door.

The boy next door was walking in the back yard. Norton spied him, and ran across the room.

"I'm going to get acquainted with him," he told his mother, as he rushed by her.

The boy next door had moved in two days before, but this was the first time Norton had had a chance to be neighbourly.

In three minutes Norton was back in the house, his face dark and scowling.

"Nice boy he is!" was the indignant exclamation. "I climbed up on the fence, and said 'Hullo!' and he threw up his hand and wriggled it, and then I said, 'Come on over and play' and he never answered a single word! Guess I shall run after boys that won't speak to me!"

"Perhaps he is bashful," Mrs. Wilcox said. "I'd try again if I were you."

"Well," Norton replied, "perhaps he is. I didn't think of that."

In the afternoon Norton came by the house as the boy next door was going in. Norton said, "Hullo!" in a most friendly way; but at first the other did not notice him at all. Then he turned his head and waved a greeting.

"I thought he was going to be decent this time," Norton afterward told his mother; "but he just stood there like a dunce wriggling his hand, and never answered a word when I asked him if he was going to my school. I never saw such an impolite boy. I'm not going to speak to him another time. I don't want to stand there and talk to him just to be grinned at."

"It is certainly very strange," Mrs. Wilcox said, "I don't understand it."

After that Norton always walked straight past the boy next door with his head held high.

"I'm not going to be snubbed by him," he told his mates.

Thus it went on for nearly a week. Then a neighbour came in to visit with Mrs. Wilcox. Norton was in the room.

"I called on Mrs. Mansfield yesterday," said the neighbour. "She is a very pleasant woman. I think we shall all like her. And the boy Jasper is a sweet little fellow. You must get acquainted with him, Norton. It is a pity he is deaf and dumb, isn't it? Oh, didn't you know it? Yes, he cannot hear a sound. His mother thinks he may be taught to talk, but he is not strong enough to go away to school yet. He could hear as well as anybody when he was little; but, just as he was beginning to talk, he had this dreadful sickness, and it left him totally deaf. So that ended his talking. He is very lonely, having had to leave his mates. They lived away up at the north end of the city. His mother says she hopes he can get acquainted with the children around here, but of course they cant talk with him and it makes it bad. He talks fast enough with his fingers. Dear me, how he makes them fly!"

Mrs. Wilcox turned to where Norton had been sitting, but he was not there. After the visitor had gone, his mother found him crying.

"To think I should have been so mean to him!" Norton sobbed.

"But you didn't know," his mother said soothingly.

Norton started up, and brushed away his tears.

"I'm going straight over to see him!" he cried.

From that hour the two were fast friends, and in time Norton learned to "wriggle" his fingers almost as fast as Jasper himself.—EMMA C. DOWD.

Guild News.

THE National Conference Guilds Union held its autumnal meeting at the Old Meeting Church on Saturday, November 2nd. Representatives from the Guilds at Kidderminster, Leicester, Oldbury, and Birmingham, assembled to the number of about 100. The chair was taken by the President, Rev. F. K. Freeston, who spoke of the Guild work and the desirability of affiliation. He called attention to the different objects the Union had in view—the essay scheme and the reading circle—and emphasised the advantages of co-operation. During the afternoon and evening most interesting papers were read by the Rev. J. E. Stronge, Mr. Highfield (Kidderminster), Miss Gittins (Leicester), and Miss M. Twist (Birmingham). A vote of thanks to the Old Meeting Guild members for their hospitality was proposed by the Rev. E. A. Voysey, and a successful gathering was brought to a close. We have much pleasure in giving our readers the paper read by Miss Twist.

WHAT OUR GUILD IS DOING.

By MINNIE TWIST.

I HAVE been asked to speak this afternoon on what we are doing at the Old Meeting Guild. The subject appears easy enough at first, but when you start to write about it, you wonder what you can possibly say that will be of interest to anyone, beyond the bare facts and figures of an annual report.

The Old Meeting Guild of Kindness has been in existence for 19 years. Our motto is for "God and the Good Life," which you will recognise as the motto of the National Conference

Guilds Union. We are divided into two branches, the Senior and the Junior Guild, or rather the Senior Guild supports a Junior one. In the Senior branch we have 130 members on the roll, all above the age of 15, and these young people are also either members of the Church, School, or Afternoon Adult Class. We have our Monthly Meeting on the first Monday in each month, when the average attendance is about 45; of course this attendance varies, as we get more members during the winter than in the summer months. We open our service with the Guild Hymn, "Master, we fain would follow Thee," which is followed by one of the services from the Manual prepared by the Committee of the Guilds Union; an address is given by the Warden, Sub-Warden, or other friend; this is followed either by vocal or instrumental music. New members are admitted, the reports of the various sections are read, and the business of the Guild is transacted. The subscription to the Guild is 1s. per year; and this subscription entitles the member to attend the various classes in connection with the Guild.

Now, as to our work. We may be said to have four objects in view:—1st, To provide sufficient funds for, and to carry on, the work of the Junior Guild; 2nd, To provide funds for the Sick Children's Country Holiday Scheme; 3rd, To provide recreation for our members; and 4th, To cultivate the religious life. On each of these points I wish to say a few words. To begin then with the least important object, that of recreation. We hold every Monday evening during the winter, except the first Monday in each month, a Recreation Class which is open to all members of the Guild. The time is spent in talking, games, and sometimes a little music. Refreshments are sold to the members, and the evening is brought to a close with about half an hour's dancing. This year the refreshments sold at the Recreation Class yielded a profit of 10s., which was given to the Sick Children's Holiday Fund. Then we have a Girls' Musical Drill Class during the winter and a Tennis Club in the summer. In the winter we have also a Singing Class which has been very successful. In the early part of this year the Singing Class performed the play of the Pied Piper which was very successful. The Boys' Gymnasium, the Football and Cricket Clubs, have been taken in hand by the Athletic Union, so that they do not now come directly under the Guild.

The Sick Children's Country Holiday Fund is, as its name denotes, a scheme for sending into the country the Sick Children of our Sunday School, or at least a portion of them. For this purpose we take a collection at each of our Monthly Meetings, and we have also a subscription list for friends who are interested in the Guild work. By these means we are enabled to send into the country each year 16 or 20 children for a fortnight's holiday each. The children chosen are or have been sick, or weak, or poor, and they are those who most need a change. The selection is made at this end by the Superintendent of the Girls' School, and arrangements are made by a friend in the country to place them in suitable homes, to visit them when there, and to see that they are happy and well looked after. The children appreciate their holiday very much, and have most wonderful stories to relate when they return of the things they have seen, or heard, or done. This year we were able to send 20 children, and I should like to see 24 go next year, indeed it seems a pity that we cannot send even a greater number than that. I fear we little realise what this holiday means, we do not understand what it is to these little ones to live for even a fortnight in the real open country, in clean, healthy surroundings, with plenty of good food, to see each day trees and fields and birds, and to be able to run about where they like without seeing the small iron notice "Keep off the grass." If we only fully realised what happiness we can bring into these little lives, the Fund would rise by leaps and bounds.

The Junior Guild is perhaps the greatest piece of work our Guild does. I do not say it is the most important but it influences and makes happy the greatest number. The Junior Guild consists of 145 members, all of them children in our Sunday School, under the age of 14.

They meet every Tuesday from October to April, in all about 23 evenings. The average attendance is over 87 per cent., so you will see that it is no trouble to get the children to join. Generally, about May, just when the Guild has finished, you are met by small groups who ask you "When will the Guild begin again?" If you reply "Oh, in a few months," you may be sure you will be asked the same question every time they see you. It is therefore better to reply, "We shall begin when the summer is over," which quite satisfies them. At the end of September we announce from the desk the date of the first meeting, which is held at 6 o'clock. As early as five you will find some of the children about, playing, eating their bread and butter, and waiting to come in. We assemble them in a line and march them in, then the service opens with a hymn and the Lord's Prayer. The first night there is plenty of quiet fun for the onlooker. The girls are divided up into classes for scrapbook making, doll dressing, patchwork, cradle-making, singing, knitting, cardboard work, mat making, and fancy work. The classes for the boys are clay modelling, painting, wood carving, and fretwork. Each class is called out in turn, and the children who wish to join that class go to the teacher of it. Children are very much like sheep, and it is no uncommon thing for half the Guild to make a rush for some special class, perhaps mat making or knitting. Then of course you have to sort them out, and persuade them that they are too old for that class, or that *you* specially want them to go say into

doll dressing and dress a doll for you, or you use any other argument you can think of. When you have got the children fairly settled down, you attend to those you have not seen before, and who have not been to the Guild in previous years. In reply to your question, "Which class would you like to join?" you get an answer of this sort from a child of six: "I 'ants to be in 'er class." "Which one?" "That teacher there with the glasses what always smiles." Or from a boy of 6, "Oh, I want to be a carpenter," or "Please, can Tommy be in painting, 'cause Mother says he'll get hisself all over clay if he's in the Clay Class," and most likely Tommy does not know blue from pink or green from yellow, as the teacher of that class finds out when he paints her a blue tree and a green pig. This goes on until every child is settled in a class in which they have to remain for that term at least, we do not allow the children to change about unless for some very good reason.

The children contribute 2d. each to the Guild, and when this is paid they receive a card of membership, which is treasured up and kept year after year. One girl told me the other day when I gave her her card, that she had eight already. Of course the first night or two we get a lot of children who do not come to the School, so we have to send them home; they are "always just going to join the School," but home they must go until they have really joined, and then we admit them. The children here are not at all particular. They come to the Old Meeting Sunday School every Sunday, we make sure of that, but after the Junior Guild closes at seven on Tuesdays, they do not in the least mind going to the Wesleyan Band of Hope, which begins at 7.30, and to the Bristol Hall Band of Hope at eight on Wednesdays. If any denomination would start a Band of Hope or something on Thursday, I am sure they would be equally ready to join. It is evident the other denominations are not as careful as we are. I was very much amused last year when five babies out of the Scrapbook Class, the eldest not eight by any means, came to ask me if they might leave early. "What for" I asked—when one replied, "We's going to a social at Bristol Hall!" Fancy a social for babies beginning at seven o'clock.

The alternate Tuesday is devoted to a magic lantern lecture. The children enjoy this very much indeed, and quickly know when they have seen a set of slides before, and woe betide you if you discard the book and tell the tale a different way. They know, and you may hear a whisper, "Oh, he's altered it, she ought to get well now, not to die." These lantern services as well as being amusing give the little ones a great deal of useful knowledge. The slides are often historical or geographical ones, illustrating the manners and customs of foreign lands and olden times, and thus the children are instructed and amused at the same time. We find that they remember a good deal of what is told them. Every second year we hold an Exhibition of the work we have done, and those children who have attended regularly are given the article they have made as a prize. We are very fortunate in having friends who give us materials, such as pieces for doll dressing, patchwork, and scrapbooks. This of course helps our funds, and enables us to keep the Junior Guild successfully going.

The fourth object of the Guild and most important of all is the cultivation of the Good Life. Our monthly services specially aim at this, and once a year our minister gives a series of six or eight Sunday afternoon addresses, with a view of preparing members for confirmation. Every other year, on the first Sunday in July, a confirmation service is held, followed by a First Communion. This year 16 of our members offered themselves for this service, and afterwards signed the Church Roll.

And now, in conclusion, is this all we are doing? I think not. I believe we are doing a greater work than we can put on paper or in a report. Many of our members, I feel sure, are faithfully and honestly trying to live up to the silent pledge they give when they become members of our Guild, "They are trying to foster the religious life, to keep life at an ideal level, to free it from selfishness, and to render some loving service for the uplifting of man." The result of our Guild work will be shown in the years that lie before us, in the strong, faithful body of young people who will be ready, as far as it lies in their power, to serve the Church and the School to which they belong, and through that Church the great cause of Liberal Religion which we have so deeply at heart.

News from the Field.

We close our story this month. It has been told regularly and faithfully, and its record will stand as a chronicle of doings and developments in the past. The vehicle of communication goes forward no longer, but the story of "Seed Sowing" will continue, and the Divine work among us will go on as ever "prospering and to prosper."

But to close our record now.

We notice many changes, some full of significance, since our last issue, and many which we cannot even indicate, other pages, of other journals, must tell of these; and another pen must write the story.

Since our last issue we note that the *Rev. G. C. Cressey, D.D.*, of the *U.S.America*, has accepted a call from our friends at *Brixton*; that the energetic and successful Minister at *Norwich* has resigned his pulpit there, and agreed to go to *Newcastle-on-Tyne*, where he will have a more commanding position, which will properly tax all his varied powers; that the *Rev. W. McMullans*, of the *H.M.College*, is to go to *Swinton*;

that welcomes have been given to *Rev. J. Shaw Brown* at *Newchurch*, to *Rev. W. Lindsay* at *South Shields*, to the *Rev. W. Lyddon Tucker, M.A.*, at *Bridport*, and to the *Rev. R. P. Farley, B.A.*, at *Bell Street, London.*

We also observe that *Mr. H. Warnock*, of the *H.M.College*, is to go to *Colne*, while resignations have been handed in by *Rev. G. A. Ferguson*, of *Gateshead;* and by the *Rev. J. Tyssul Davis*, of *Chatham*, who is to be warmly congratulated on his appointment to the *Principalship* of *Ananda College, Colombo.*

These various changes are only symptomatic, and samples not so much of unrest and uncertainty as of development and progress.

We may warmly congratulate the *Rev. A. Hall, M.A.*, on the good work he has done at *Norwich*, not only in securing the success of the *Martineau Memorial*, but the substantial additions he has made to the congregation during his ministry. He now goes to a larger sphere, and hearty good wishes will go with him.

We note, with pleasure, the opening of the New Congregational Hall at *Kidderminster* by *Sir Edward and Lady Durning Laurence*, and also of the New *Durning Hall* in *London.* It is pleasing to note the activity and generosity Sir Edward and his lady shew towards all our Missionary Movements. We also record, with pleasure, the laying of the Foundation Stone of the *Richard Lyttle Memorial National School*, at *Moneyrea*, the building to be a permanent record of a brave, self-denying, and devoted servant of God and of His people.

It is cheering to read of the greetings which were exchanged between the *Ministerial Fellowship* of England and our Churches in Canada and the United States. Such exchanges of goodwill draw closer the bonds of union between the workers on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean.

We do not wonder that the returning pilgrims from the West have met with warm greetings and strong affection in London, Sheffield, and elsewhere. The story has been well told, and will deepen the desire for closer communion among free religious thinkers all over the world.

The *Midland Lay Preachers* have the happy usage of meeting together in Conference and comparing notes as to their work and prospects. They have among them a most promising coworker of the fair sex. We commend their example to other groups of lay preachers throughout the country.

The *British and Foreign Unitarian Council* had a stirring meeting the other day, when they told the story of their growing work, heard the reports of their representatives from over the seas, and told of their effort to augment the funds of the Association so as to entitle them to the continued gift of the anonymous donor of £1,000 a year. We do not doubt they will succeed in this endeavour. We await their announcement with great hopefulness, if not of assurance.

It was well to hold the *N.Midland Association Meetings* at *Northampton.* In every respect this meeting will do good. We congratulate all concerned.

The *Wolverhampton* people are to be congratulated on the advantageous sale they have made of their temporary premises, and the resolute effort they are making to build on the new and splendid site they have secured for a new and suitable building of a permanent character, and worthy of their great and growing town. The people seem to be doing their utmost, and generous friends are shewing substantial sympathy.

Before our record closes it is a happy privilege to report that in the Midlands real progress is taking place at *Small Heath, Wolverhampton, Whitchurch, West Bromwich*, and *Walsall*, while our self-supporting congregations are fairly holding their own. Better days have come, and an enterprising spirit is being shewn.

The "Vans" have concluded their rounds, and the story of their activities is full of romance and interest, telling at once of the willingness, sometimes eagerness, of the people to hear, and of the substantial additions made throughout the country to the body of reverent religious thinkers. It is cheering to know that our brethren across the seas are earnestly thinking of following in the steps of their English brethren.

The *Provincial Assembly of London and S.E. Counties* meet at Hampstead, and stimulated one another by the records of the past to larger and more progesssive work in the future.

Oldham Road Congregation, Manchester, celebrated with great zeal and happiness the jubilee of their establishment last month, and while thanking God for the help of the past, took fresh courage, as they stepped forward into the coming years.

The old Chapel at *Conigre, Trowbridge*, also celebrated the jubilee of their present building, and put up a fine Memorial Brass to the noble-hearted *Rev. Samuel Martin*, whose good work and pure life will never be forgotten, for it is written in the lives of many who heard him, and in the charming traditions which are handed down to the children.

The *Sheffield Unitarian Sunday School* had a helpful meeting at Rotherham, and the workers went back more earnest and devoted than ever.

We cannot close these records without a tribute of honour to brave and noble men like Mr. W. Wallace Bruce, Mr. A. Sydney Field, and the Rev. W. James, J.P., who have passed out of our earthly companionship, but who have left behind them a record of noble service and exalted purity, which will continue to work for righteousness, even though we see them on earth no more.

To all readers of the SEED SOWER we say "Farewell," and wish for them and the Editor—able, and self-sacrificing as he has proved himself—God-speed.

SCRUTATOR.

November 15th, 1907.

THE TEMPLAR PRESS, 168, EDMUND STREET, BIRMINGHAM

THE HURST STREET MISSION

MONTHLY

Record and Seed Sower.

DECEMBER, 1907.

MISSIONARY: MR. W. J. CLARKE.
(Private address :—Rayleigh House, Selly Park Road, Selly Park, Birmingham.)
Mission Telephone, No. 1075 Midland.

Sunday Services for the People etc.

PUBLIC Religious Worship is conducted in the Hurst Street Chapel every Sunday at a quarter-past ten, three, and half-past six. To these services all who are not already connected with any other place of worship, but who may, in the love of truth and as disciples of Jesus Christ, desire to unite, for the worship of God and the service of man are cordially invited.

All desiring to become members of the congregation (which involves no pecuniary obligation of any kind) are earnestly requested to hand in their names and addresses after any Sunday evening service, when they will be added to the Chapel Register, and a Card of Membership handed to them.

Arrangements for Services, December, 1907.

December 1st.

SUNDAY MORNING ADULT CLASS (10.15).
Service conducted by Mr. W. J. Clarke, who will read
"A Christmas Carol," by Dickens. Stave one.
Vocal solos, Mr. R. Wills.
P.S.A. (3 o'clock).
Service conducted by Mr. W. J. Clarke, who will read
"A Christmas Carol," by Dickens. Stave one.
Vocal Solos by the Cloister Quartette.
EVENING SERVICE (6.30).
Preacher, Mr. W. J. Clarke.
Anthem by Choir.

December 8th.

SUNDAY MORNING ADULT CLASS (10.15).
Service conducted by Mr. W. J. Clarke, who will read
"A Christmas Carol," by Dickens. Stave two.
Vocal Solos, Mr. F. Moseley.
P.S.A. (3 o'clock).
Service conducted by Mr. W. J. Clarke, who will read
"A Christmas Carol," by Dickens. Stave two.
Vocal Solos by Miss Edith Cresswell.
EVENING SERVICE (6.30).
Preacher, Mr. W. J. Clarke.
Anthem by Choir, and Special Sacred Concert.

December 15th

SUNDAY MORNING ADULT CLASS (10.15).
Service conducted by Mr. W. J. Clarke, who will read
"A Christmas Carol," by Dickens. Stave three.
Vocal Solos, Miss Nellie Showell.
P.S.A. (3 o'clock).
Service conducted by Mr. W. J. Clarke, who will read
"A Christmas Carol," by Dickens. Stave three.
Vocal solos, Mr. R. Wills.
EVENING SERVICE (6.30).
Preacher, Mr. W. J. Clarke.
Anthem by Choir.

December 22nd.

SUNDAY MORNING ADULT CLASS (10.15).
Service conducted by Mr. W. J. Clarke, who will read
"A Christmas Carol," by Dickens. Stave four.
Vocal Solos, Miss May Wetten.
P.S.A. (3 o'clock).
Service conducted by Mr. W. J. Clarke, who will read
"A Christmas Carol," by Dickens. Stave four.
Vocal Solos, Mr. Leonard Browne.
EVENING SERVICE (6-30).
Preacher, Mr. W. J. Clarke.
CHRISTMAS SERVICE.
Appropriate Chapel Decoration.
Special Hymns, Carols, and Anthem.

December 29th.

SUNDAY MORNING ADULT CLASS (10.15).
Service conducted by Mr. W. J. Clarke, who will read
"A Christmas Carol," by Dickens. Stave five.
Vocal Solos, Mr. S. Clarke.
P.S.A. (3 o'clock).
Service conducted by Mr. W. J. Clarke, who will read
"A Christmas Carol," by Dickens. Stave five.
Vocal Solos by Miss F. Williams.
EVENING SERVICE (6.30).
Preacher, Mr. W. J. Clarke.
CHRISTMAS SERVICE.
Appropriate Chapel Decoration.
Special Hymns, Carols, and Anthem.

Christmas and New Year Benevolent and Social Functions 1907-8.

1907.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24th.
Distribution of Home Comforts among The Deserving Poor, 2 to 4.
(Tickets only.)

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25th.
Christmas Breakfast and Gifts for Poor Children. To commence at 9.30.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 27th.
Scholars' Party. Tea at 5 o'clock.
Entertainment at 6. Scholars' Tickets 3d. each.
Admission to Concert and Entertainment for Adults, at 6 o'clock, 2d. each.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28th.
P.S.A. Soirée.
Tea, Concert, Dramatic Performance, Dancing.
To commence at 6 o'clock. Tickets, 1s. each.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 30th.
Morning Class Soirée.
Tea at 6 prompt. Concert at 7.
Dramatic Performance at 8, concluding with Dancing. Tickets 1s. each.
Double (Inclusive) Ticket (Lady and Gentleman), 1s 6d.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 31st.
Teachers' Soirée.
Tea at 6-30 prompt. Concert at 7-30.
Dancing at 9 o'clock. Tea tables cleared at 7-15, after which no more will be served.
Tickets, 1s. each.

1908.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 1st.
Aged People's Dinner.
Dinner, Entertainment, and Gift to Poor Aged People. To commence at 1-30 o'clock.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 2nd.
Mothers' Meeting Party.
Tea at 5 o'clock. Entertainment at ¼ to 6.
Tickets, 4d. each.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 3rd.
Military Veterans' Supper.
Supper at 7.
Entertainment at 8.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 4th.
Juvenile Band of Hope Party.
Tea at 4-30. Entertainment, and New Year Gift. Tickets, 3d. each.

MONDAY, JANUARY 6th.
Pierrot Troupe Party.
Concert, Refreshments, Dancing.
To commence at 6 o'clock.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 7th.
Girls' Social Club Party.
Music, Dramatic Sketch, Games.
Refreshments. To commence at 7 o'clock.
Tickets, 6d. each.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8th.
Congregational Party.
Invitational Gathering.
To commence at 7-30.
Refreshments supplied at moderate charges.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 9th.
Slum Children's Party.
Tea at 4-30. Entertainment and Gift.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 11th.
Sunday School Choir Party.
Concert, Miscellaneous Entertainment, Refreshments, etc.
To commence at 7 o'clock.

MONDAY, JANUARY 13th.
Chapel Choir Party.
Concert, Games, Refreshments.
Choir members no charge.
Friends' tickets, 6d. each.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 18th.
Senior Band of Hope Party.
Concert, Games, Refreshments, Dancing.
To commence at 6 o'clock.
Tickets, 3d. each.

The above announcements are made subject to alteration, of which, should any become necessary, due notice will be given.

:o:

Notices.

A MEETING of the Teachers' Executive Committee will be held on Monday, December 9th, at 7-45.

The Annual Meeting of the Teachers will be held on Sunday, January 12th, 1908, at 3 o'clock. The Secretary, the President, and the Sunday School Officers generally, earnestly hope that every member of the Teachers' Society, without exception, will endeavour to be present on this occasion.

:o:

Annual Meeting.

THE Lord Mayor has fixed Monday, 24th February, 1908, for the Annual Meeting of the Mission.

:o:

Police-Aided Association for Clothing Destitute Children.

THE Annual Meeting of this Association was held at the Council House on Thursday, November 28th, under the presidency of the Lord Mayor, and I think it probable that most, and probably even all the readers of SEED SOWER will be interested in the following report of the Committee which was submitted to and approved by the meeting.

SECRETARY'S REPORT.

The season's work which we now have to report to you, we regard as a fairly satisfactory and encouraging one. Of course, if we had received more money, and been able in consequence to minister to the wants of a larger number of children, we should regard it as still more satisfactory and encouraging. But experience, that most potent and reliable of all counsellors, has taught us that in connection with benevolent work, as with most other things, one seldom gets all one hopes for; and that true wisdom consists in making the most and the best of what you *do* get, while looking forward patiently and hopefully for the better days to come.

During the year which is the subject of this report, we dealt with 2,564 children, who received among them 2,402 pairs of boots and 9,576 garments. Adding these figures to those given in previous reports as follow, it will be seen that since we began the Society's work in 1893, we have dealt with 25,623 children, to whom have been supplied 24,592 pairs of boots and 129,996 garments.

We referred in our last Report, with unqualified satisfaction, to the circumstance that the scope of the *Birmingham Daily Mail* Christmas Tree Fund had been widened, including among other praiseworthy objects, the supplying of boots and clothing to the poorest and neediest children in the city. The measure of acute suffering from which innocent and helpless children have thus been preserved, will be realised when it is stated that through the agency of that fund alone, 3,259 children received boots or garments, or both.

Add to these the 2,564 dealt with by the P.A.A. as already stated, and we have a total of no fewer than 5,823 children who during last autumn and winter were supplied with boots or clothing, or both, by the efforts of the *Daily Mail* fund and of your Association combined.

We have heard fears expressed in some quarters lest the help now being given in this direction may not only overtake, but even go beyond, the real necessities. Unhappily, accurate knowledge as to the actual facts shows that the very reverse is the case. We venture to assert that none who are interested in this terrible problem are better able to judge as to what the necessities of the poor children of our city really are than the teachers in our Elementary Schools Now, some few months since we caused an enquiry to be addressed to the masters and mistresses of all the Elementary Schools in the city as to the number of children who in their judgment would during the autumn and winter months be exposed to acute suffering, owing to need of the clothing which their parents could not, or at any rate did not supply. The total

returned came out at 8,400 Add to this a moderate estimate of the number of children just above and just below school age, who are in the same pitiable circumstances, and we have a total of not fewer than 11,000 poor children, who but for the help of the *Daily Mail* Fund, the P.A.A., and other philanthropic agencies, must have their naked limbs half frozen with cold, and be forced to undergo a measure of cruel bodily suffering, from which well nourished, warmly clothed men and women might well be excused for shrinking from, and all owing to causes which they have not had a shadow's shade of share in bringing about, and which they are utterly powerless to remove. To what extent the parents themselves are responsible for this, nothing less than terrible state of things, the exact proportion of it which is due to pure misfortune or to culpable and callous misconduct, as to these and similar considerations it is certain we shall never all agree. But surely most, if not all of us, will agree in this :—That the children themselves have a claim which cannot be gainsaid, not only on our compassionate sympathy, but on our practical help, and that to leave them to endure their sufferings as best they may, whatever the cause of those sufferings may be, without lifting a finger to help them, is nothing short of an impious denial of the Fatherhood of God, and an equally impious repudiation of the Brotherhood of Man.

In connection with this human life of ours there are many things which cannot do other than excite our deepest sympathy, but nothing probably appeals more directly to the tenderest compassions of which our nature is capable than the sufferings and the sorrows of children. How many of us are there who do not, when thinking of the children, often find ourselves involuntarily asking with Longfellow—

"For what are all our contrivings,
And the wisdom of our books,
When compared with your caresses
And the gladness of your looks."

But surely the fact that some of the deepest emotions which ever stir within us are those aroused by children whose lives are for the most part blest with joy and colour and sunshine, should cause us to turn with readier sympathy and more eager desire to help and befriend those whose lives are spent for the most part amid the grim shadows of squalor, and suffering, and want. So long therefore as there remains in this city children exposed not only to the physical but to the mental, the moral, and the spiritual ills of which insufficiency of food and clothing is the prolific parent; so long do we hope that the P.A.A. will continue its efforts to do at least something towards the alleviation of the hard conditions of their lot; and above all to do it in that spirit of love which is the mightest power and the divinest influence known either in heaven or on earth.

W. J. CLARKE,
Hon. Sec.

Communications from our Workers.

JUNIOR SUNDAY SCHOOL.—We held our usual Monthly Joint Service in the Junior School on Sunday morning, November 3rd, and again spent a very pleasant and a very helpful hour together.

We had an address from our esteemed friend, Mr. J. Hemming, who said it afforded him much pleasure to be speaking once again to scholars at the school where he had taught for so many years. He took for his subject, "The Falling Leaf," upon which he founded a most interesting and instructive address, and I hope we shall soon have the pleasure of hearing him again.

The other items consisted of a pianoforte solo by Mr. W. Coleman, and vocal solos by Miss F. Williams, and Mr. R. Jones, who sang (by request), "The Village Blacksmith," and which he rendered in first-class style.

We are much indebted to these and to other friends for the help in this direction which they are always cheerfully rendering. These monthly services make a pleasant break in the ordinary school routine, and are looked forward to by all, especially by the teachers, who always make a point of being present. The address on December 1st will be given by Mr. Herbert Thompson, his subject being "Little Things." J. J. COLEMAN.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CONCERT.—On Monday, November 18th, a Concert was given in the Hall, on behalf of our Sunday School, which drew a very large and a very appreciative audience. The first part was given by our Sunday School Choir, consisting of a Cantata, entitled, "The Picnic." This was something of a novelty, and a very pleasing novelty too. Our excellent friends and untiring workers, Mr. C. Johnson, and Mr. W. Coleman, had evidently spared neither time nor attention in getting up this part of the programme; for otherwise it could not have been the great success which it certainly was. The short sketch, "Sugar and Cream," which formed the second part was evidently thoroughly enjoyed by all, from the youngest to the oldest; and I think our friend, Mr. J. Webb, and the others who took part in it, deserve our heartiest thanks for thus helping to bring the evening to such a pleasant close.

Before closing this brief report I should like to express my sincere obligation to the ladies who so promptly and kindly acted on Mr. Clarke's suggestion by removing their hats. This was a new departure, but the effect was so good, and enabled so many to see the stage easily, who otherwise would have had great difficulty in doing so, that I think there must be many others who, like myself, hope that this custom will in future become the rule on similar occasions. WM. ROSSITER.

Leaves from the Missionary's Note Book.

CHRISTMAS SERVICES.

I WISH to call special attention to the circumstance that special Christmas Services will this time be held in the chapel on Sunday, December 22nd and the 29th. Well, now, having regard to the season of the year, and to the fact that special preparations, involving much time, thought, and work in the special music given by the choir, the decoration of the chapel, etc., are made, it is surely a reasonable expectation that the attendance should, if anything, be larger than usual. But instead of this being the case they have as a rule been smaller. Now to myself, and I venture to say to the members of the choir, to those who undertake the task of decorating the chapel, and to many others, this is most discouraging. Earnestly do I trust that our experience in this direction during the Christmas season which is now so close upon us will be of a different, and a far more cheering character. Will every member of the Morning Class, the P.S.A., and the Congregation who may read these lines, resolve to be present at the Christmas Services on the 22nd and the 29th of December? If only they will do so, then we shall have the delight and the inspiration of seeing the Chapel filled, instead of the de-

pressing spectacle of a number of vacant seats.

If you, reader, in whatever capacity you may be associated with the Mission, will resolve to be there yourself and induce others to do likewise, and not take it for granted that if you are not present others will be, then our Christmas Service attendances will indeed be not only what I hope they will be, but what in my judgment they ought to be.

PERRY CONCERT.

THAT the above Entertainment was an unqualified success, both numerically and artistically, was made quite clear by the paragraph relating to it which appeared in last month's SEED SOWER.

How great a success it was financially will be realised when it is stated that, as the monetary result, I have had the happiness of sending to Mrs. Perry a cheque for ten guineas. Happily, when any benevolent effort is called for which seems to have a special claim upon us, the hearty and sympathetic co-operation of the Hurst Street Mission "Workers" can always be confidently reckoned upon.

To all who assisted in any way in securing this most creditable, and most encouraging result, I tender my sincerest and heartiest thanks.

What Mrs. Perry herself thinks of it will be readily understood from the following letter received from her from London, where she is at present, and from which I have omitted only some references to myself personally, which, though I have no doubt that they represent her real convictions, I feel to be so far beyond my real deserts that I cannot bring myself to reproduce them.

November 21st, 1907.

My dear Mr. Clarke,

I was most pleased with your kind letter and the handsome cheque for ten guineas which it contained. I am quite unable to put my thoughts into words, so as to tell you in writing how *very, very* grateful I am to you and to all your helpers for the more than kind interest shown by you and by them in my behalf.

I hope and trust, dear friend, that you will be spared health and strength for many years to come, to continue the noble work which is being done at Hurst Street, and I shall always think of all of you, and remember your kindness as long as I live.

With the best of good wishes, believe me, sincerely and gratefully yours,

FLORENCE PERRY.

COLLECTING CARDS.

I AM as anxious as ever that as large an addition as possible should be made to our Christmas Relief, and Winter Distress Fund, by means of the Collecting Cards we have for many years past been in the habit of asking our friends to do their best with at this season of the year. And I venture, therefore, to repeat here some observations I made in relation to this matter in the SEED SOWER of December, 1906.

"I have always regarded these cards as giving an opportunity to those who perhaps can assist in no other way, of helping to bring some measure of Christmas cheer and New Year brightness into hearts and homes, where they are all too sadly and sorely needed. It has therefore always been a matter for great surprise to me that while many of our friends enter heartily into this mode of raising funds for benevolent work, so many others never by any chance lend a helping hand. Some, I believe, urge that "they don't like begging." But surely this is rather a feeble sort of objection. To begin with, the term "begging" is not applicable at all. It would be if those who asked for a trifling contribution on a collecting card did it for their own personal benefit, but seeing that they are asking help for others, who can neither plead their own cause, nor return their own thanks, it is an act of pure self-sacrifice rather than a begging policy which is involved.

Not only so, but the large number of small contributions which these collecting cards bring in, shows conclusively that there are many kindly disposed people whose means

are not large enough to enable them to assist in any other way, who are quite willing to help in this. And the chances are, I think, that there are hundreds, and probably thousands, of others who would cheerfully do likewise, if only they were asked. Once more, then, I urge upon every member of our congregation, our Teachers' Society, our Sunday Morning Class, and our P.S.A., to at least make an attempt, by means of our collecting cards, to add during this coming Christmas and New Year season, to the comfort and the happiness of those who are less fortunately placed than themselves. It is as true of this as of much else—that you never know what you can do till you try!—and if only *all* the friends and workers associated with the Mission would try what they could do with a Collecting Card, I venture to prophesy that the result would be an addition to our Christmas and New Year Relief Fund, which would gladden the heart of many a poor sufferer, and would be a real happiness to me, and that in more senses than one."

SOMETHING TO BEAR IN MIND.

THE Missionary, owing to the size of the congregation, is frequently unable to notice the absence of regular attendants and would be glad if members would tell him when they notice the absence of a familiar face, so that the absentees may be visited, as it sometimes occurs that a regular attendant at our services may be away for a week or two through illness or trouble without his absence coming to the knowledge of the Missionary.

It should also be clearly understood that the personal visitation of the sick and deserving poor at their own homes, and in that way ascertaining, and (as far as possible) supplying the most urgent of their wants, material, moral, and spiritual, is a main and essential feature of the work of this Institution; and the Missionary will therefore deem it a personal favour if friends, becoming aware of any case where—owing to illness, distress, or any other cause—his presence may be useful, will report the same at the Mission Rooms, Hurst Street.

A HINT TO THOSE WHO CARE TO TAKE IT.

I am sometimes asked by friends attending one or more of our Sunday Services to repeat some particular sermon or address. And to be perfectly candid I venture occasionally to do this without being asked. But I wish to say plainly that I shall always be exceedingly glad to comply with any request of this sort which may be made to me; and for two reasons: In the first place, I need not be guilty of the affectation of pretending that it is not a source of satisfaction to learn that any one has been sufficiently interested in any utterance of mine to desire to have it repeated; and in the second place, with one's time and work so closely dovetailed in, as mine seems always to be, anything which tends to economise both is a real and welcome help.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT.

I feel sure that all the friends and workers connected with the Mission will share both the surprise and regret which I feel in stating that with this present December number the issue of the SEED SOWER will come to an end. Our friend, the Rev. Joseph Wood, who has edited it, and been responsible for its publication from the first, finds, I believe, that his other engagements have become so numerous, and the demands on his time and personal services in other directions so exacting, that he can no longer continue the editorship of the SEED SOWER. That the SEED SOWER has long been heartily welcomed, and been a source of genuine interest and of real help, and will be deeply missed in the homes of hundreds of those associated with the Hurst Street Mission. I can of my own knowledge affirm. That part of it which we have been in the habit of localising for our own purpose, we shall endeavour in some form to continue; for having regard to the number of our agencies, and the frequency of our meetings and gatherings of various sorts, a monthly Mission Calendar and Record of some sort is indispensable. The exact form which this will take and the date of issue, I shall, after conferring with those more immediately concerned, endeavour to arrange as soon as possible.

W. J. CLARKE, *Missionary.*

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The Seed Sower.

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR
THE CHURCH, THE SCHOOL, AND THE HOME.
"Behold, a Sower went forth to Sow."
EDITOR: REV. J. WOOD.

VOL. 5 (New Series) No. 1. JANUARY, 1907. PRICE ONE PENNY.

CONTENTS.

		Page.
1.	Weather-Vane. Poem	1
2.	For the New Year	1
3.	The Self Conscious. Sermon	3
4.	Bills in the Family Session	6
5.	Chadwick's New Year Hymn. Music	8
6.	Sonnets	8
7.	The Poetry of Life	9
8.	The Sunset Limited	10
9.	Notes and Jottings	10
10.	The Leaf and the Life. Poem	12
11.	The Baptism of Jesus	12
12.	Seed Corn	13
13.	The Children's Page. How Johnny was Cured	14
14.	News from the Field	15

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WINTER SPECTACLES.

As early as the year 1420 Spectacles were worn to protect the eyes from the cold air and from the peculiar glare caused by the whiteness of the snow. To-day the science of spectacle-fitting has advanced, and does not require everyone to wear spectacles for the above purpose. But as the dark winter nights come along many people find difficulty in reading or sewing by artificial light. This is nature's warning, and although you may not want to wear spectacles, your eyes need their help. Do not strain you eyes but call and consult us. **Advice Free.**

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EDITOR: REV. J. WOOD.

VOL. 5 (New Series) No. 2. FEBRUARY, 1907. PRICE ONE PENNY.

CONTENTS.

		Page.
1.	The Revealing Darkness. Poem	17
2.	The Old Orthodoxy and the New	17
3.	Humorous Epigrams	21
4.	Example	22
5.	"O Rest in the Lord"	23
6.	Notes and Jottings	25
7.	Spreaders of Sunshine	27
8.	"The Seven Wayfarers"	28
9.	Children's Page.—The Children's Song—A Neglected Salute—A Wind Song ...	30
10.	News from the Field	31
11.	Seed Corn	32

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CONTENTS.

		Page.
1.	Daffodils. Poem	33
2.	The New Theology and its Pioneers. Sermon	33
3.	Contrasts. Poem	36
4.	Kisses and Caresses	37
5.	Is a man too good for Church-going?	38
6.	London Guilds Union	39
7.	"The Brethren of the Common Life"	40
8.	Notes and Jottings	43
9.	Children's Page.—Eleanor and the Cloud-Children	45
10.	News from the Field	47
11.	A Free Catholic Church	48

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EDITOR: REV. J. WOOD.

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CONTENTS.

		Page
1.	An Irish Lullaby. Poem	65
2.	The World Transfigured. Sermon	65
3.	Fat People	68
4.	The "Imitation of Christ"	70
5.	The New Reformation	72
6.	The Work of the National Conference Union for Social Service	73
7.	Lost Ideals	75
8.	Notes and Jottings	76
9.	Children's Page—A Pin and a Platter	77
10.	News from the Field	79
11.	Love. Poem	80

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CONTENTS.

		Page.
1.	Gospel of the Fields. Poem	81
2.	The Poor in Spirit. Sermon	81
3.	Some Customs and Ceremonials of the Greek Church	84
4.	"Votes for Women"	86
5.	The Function of Music	87
6.	Prayer to God	89
7.	At Sleepy Time. Poem	90
8.	Notes and Jottings	91
9.	Freedom's Fortress. Poem	92
10	Children's Page—An Awkward Laddie	93
11.	The Outward and the Inward	94
12.	News from the Field	95

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CONTENTS.

		PAGE.
1.	The Tenant	97
2.	The Over-heart	97
3.	Head and Heart	97
4.	A Cheerful Gospel	101
5.	"The Congregational Revolt against Independency"	103
6.	Emerson	104
7.	Thoughts for Quiet Moments	106
8.	Self-Surrender	107
9.	The Reverence due from the Old to the Young	108
10.	For the Children—A Forget Party	110
11.	Childhood	111
12.	News from the Field	111

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EDITOR: REV. J. WOOD.

VOL. 5 (New Series). No. 8. AUGUST, 1907. PRICE ONE PENNY.

CONTENTS.

		Page.
1.	The Paradox of Time	113
2.	The Garibaldi Centenary	113
3.	Order of Confirmation and Communion Service	117
4.	Faces and Features	120
5.	Notes and Jottings	122
6.	The Charm of Fairy Tales	124
7.	For the Children—Hymns for Children ...	125
8.	The Bournville Children's Festival ...	12
9.	News from the Field	12

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EDITOR: REV. J. WOOD.

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CONTENTS.

		Page.
1.	Vespers (Poem)	129
2.	Humour	129
3.	Of the Negative	133
4.	Two Summer Days (Poem.)	136
5.	Robert Collyer, D.D.	137
6	Unitarian Christianity and the New Theology	137
7.	Church Music (Poem)	138
8.	Notes and Jottings	139
9.	The Uplifting Motive	140
10.	The Meridian of Life	141
11.	The Four-leaf Clover	142
12.	For the Children—Which are You?	142
13.	Sir Robin the Bold	142
14.	News from the Field	143

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EDITOR: REV. J. WOOD.

VOL. 5 (New Series) No. 10. OCTOBER, 1907. PRICE ONE PENNY.

CONTENTS.

		Page.
1.	Thistle-Song (Poem)	145
2.	Walking with God	145
3.	Growing Pains	150
4.	October (Poem)	152
5.	Father Taylor	153
6.	The Valley of Life	154
7.	The Moral Life	155
8.	The Fellow who Fights Alone (Poem)	156
9.	Notes and Jottings	157
10.	For the Children—Johnny	159
11.	Minutes	159
12.	"Couldn't" and "Could"	159
13.	News from the Field	159

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EDITOR: REV. J. WOOD.

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CONTENTS.

		PAGE.
1.	Hymn by Mrs. Julia Ward Howe	161
2.	The International Council of Religious Liberals	161
3.	Brotherhood	164
4.	The International Meetings at Boston	164
5.	Hymn by Frederick L. Hosmer	166
6.	An Actor on the Pulpit	166
7.	"Fraumerei" (Poem)	167
8.	Dr. Collyer at the Yorkshire Unitarian College	168
9.	The Treatment of Nurses	169
10.	Notes and Jottings	171
11.	The Appetite of a Bird	173
12.	For the Children—The Four-leaved Clover	174
13.	Dr. Martin's Helpers	174
14.	In Grade Five	175
15.	News from the Field	175

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CONTENTS.

		Page.
1.	For a Birthday (Poem)	177
2.	To our Readers	177
3.	The King's Question (Sermon)	178
4.	The Church and the World	183
5.	Dying Leaf and Dying Year	184
6.	Respect the Burthen (Poem)	186
7.	Notes and Jottings	186
8.	For the Children—The Boy Next Door	188
9.	Guild News	189
10.	News from the Field	191

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